

All the police of the 19th precinct in New York told me in an official capacity was that he was indeed an innocent victim, and there was no reason not to grant \$1500 from the state to Alta Varney to bury her son.

ANOTHER DIMENSION

The case always nagged at me, and when I got a chance to speak on my experiences for a documentary on anti-gay violence, I decided to do some research on it.

To begin with, 10 days after Winkie's death, there was an arrest made of Alfred Desjardin, who was described as both a truck driver and a junkie. As Jerry Orbach used to say on "Law and Order," "I love it when they're stupid." Desjardin left a steak knife with his fingerprints next to Winkie's body.

But it was Winkie's story that really got to me. The Herald of Randolph provided a lot of answers. By all accounts, Winkie was a charismatic young man who had the great good fortune to grow up in a primarily loving and accepting atmosphere.

He came from South Strafford, population 1024 at the last census, and that's about a 25% growth since 1983. It's a community that is a haven for artistic types of all kinds, sculptors, painters, and folks who make their living at the theater. That's where Winkie, at an early age, developed a love for the theater.

It was the passion of his life. While still in grade school he wrote plays, designed sets, and organized the other kids into theater groups. Later on in high school he worked at adult theater companies.

Former Strafford resident Peter Smith, whom I met, told me that his best memory of Winkie Bean was watching him build, out of whatever scrap material he could find, a set for a local production of "The Elephant Man." Smith later wrote a beautiful obituary for Winkie for The Herald of Randolph. (Smith was for many years the director of the Hopkins Center.)

NOT AN ISSUE

For most people in Strafford, Winkie being gay was simply not an issue. That in itself makes his story unique, as most of the gay men and lesbians I've become acquainted with from small towns couldn't wait to get out of them to move to the big city because of the prejudice against them.

To be sure, he heard the word "faggot" every so often, usually from other kids. But Therese Linehan, whose mother Kate was friends with Alta Varney and whose older brothers were Winkie's contemporaries in school, said that those same kids who called him "faggot" would listen to him when they were part of his theater projects. Winkie had to have extraordinary charisma and leadership skills for that to happen.

Kate Linehan told me that Winkie was loved by just about everyone in the area, and by area I include the surrounding towns in the White River Valley. She remembers him always having a kind word for all, never failing to ask sincerely about people's health and welfare.

OFF TO NEW YORK

When he left to go to New York to become a set designer in the theater, it was with the well wishes of one and all in the region. No exile to the big city for Winthrop Bean. He could have been the local high school jock hero who signs a major league baseball contract; it was how he was viewed. This was a story about gay youth from a small town, a story that I had never heard before.

But on the night of May 19, 1982 after an evening of good food and drinks with some friends, Winthrop Bean decided to have a nightcap at Chaps Bar, which was on Third Avenue in the upper eighties.

Maybe feeling a bit liberated and not on his guard, he was easy prey for Desjardin

who was waiting outside the bar, no doubt looking for a gay victim who would not put up much struggle. Winkie was stabbed about eight times and left in a pool of his own blood to bleed out and die in a stairwell at 229 East 88 Street.

His screams did awake residents who called the police.

I grew up in Brooklyn myself, and in the big city you do learn street smarts. My own theory of the crime is that Winthrop Bean, because of the loving and nurturing atmosphere he was raised in, never developed them.

Therese Linehan told me that Winkie believed in the best in and of everybody. It was beyond his grasp that people could want to harm him for any reason. Evil as a concept is something that a lot of people can't comprehend.

A police tip led to Desjardin's arrest, and the case was ready to be tried by the New York County district attorney's office.

WITNESS RECANTS

A source in the DA's office told me that one of the witnesses, a key witness who could have testified and linked the circumstantial and forensic case that they had developed, went bad on them. After that, Asst. DA Patrick Dugan had no choice but to make the best bargain he could and Desjardin copped to a manslaughter-1 plea and got eight to 35 years for a brutal murder, which to me had overtones of bias.

The fact is that Desjardin selected the area around Chaps as a hunting ground. The fact that Winkie was stabbed multiple times could only come from some primitive rage. And most important for me was that not only was the incriminating steak knife left behind with the killer's fingerprints, but in what he said was a robbery, nothing was taken.

Asst. D.A. Dugan himself was saddened by this turn of events. In a letter to Alta Varney he wrote that "during the course of our investigation . . . I have learned that Winthrop was a wonderful person whose loss to his family, friends, and society is irreplaceable."

As for Desjardin, he got out after his minimum and went back to a life of crime. He was caught and pled guilty to a robbery and got 12 additional years that started in 1994. After 2006, who knows where he is now?

A HATE CRIME

The savagery of the crime is similar to a few other crimes motivated by homophobia, some that I handled claims for in the course of my years at Crime Victims Board.

And this crime seems similar to one that got national attention, that of Matthew Shepard. There is another similarity: The mothers in each case became activists of sorts.

Judy Shepard's life as spokesperson for hate crimes legislation is well known. Alta Varney chose a different route. A Winthrop Bean memorial scholarship was established shortly after Winkie's death to give funds to students who want to go into the theater. That's something that honored his passion, and something I believe he would have approved.

Winkie's name should be on a list of LGBT honored dead, right up there with Matthew Shepard, Julio Rivera, James Zappalorti, Henry Marquez, and so many others.

Time and circumstance have allowed his name to fade from consciousness in a way the others haven't except in the White River Valley of Vermont, where people still talk of him as one of the most unforgettable individuals they ever came to know.

IN RECOGNITION OF 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF PETERBILT MOTORS COMPANY

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Peterbilt Motors Company as they celebrate their 75th Anniversary. Founded January 16, 1939, Peterbilt has led the commercial vehicle industry in the design and production of innovative and technologically advanced trucks and trailers.

With their headquarters and primary manufacturing efforts based in Denton, TX, they are the largest employer in the city. A strong community partner, Peterbilt has supported charitable efforts within their community through organizations such as the United Way. They have also supported higher education through their support of the University of North Texas.

Peterbilt's leadership is particularly noteworthy in their development and production of a line of environmentally friendly trucks, including compressed natural gas and electric hybrid engines. Through these products, Peterbilt has continued its legacy as a forward-thinking organization and has generously shared and displayed their efforts with the public at several of my Annual Energy Efficiency Summits.

I am honored to join Peterbilt in celebrating this milestone in their history. As a leader in the commercial vehicle industry and a major contributor to the North Texas economy, I am proud to represent the company and their employees in the US House of Representatives.

TRIBUTE TO JERRY COLEMAN

HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, on January 18, San Diegans of all generations will flock to San Diego's Petco Park to celebrate the life of baseball legend Jerry Coleman.

Lt. Colonel Gerald Francis Coleman was a San Diego icon. He was also a decorated war hero, an All-Star baseball player and an award-winning broadcaster.

But more than that he was a husband, father, and grandfather.

At a recent gathering of family and friends, his daughter Chelsea spoke of her dad and any parent would have been proud of the eulogy she gave.

Before being the voice of the San Diego Padres, before he played for the New York Yankees, Jerry, a young man from San Jose, California, answered his country's call to duty.

In 1942, at just 18, he joined the Marines to fight in World War II, flying missions in the Pacific as a combat aviator.

After the war, he traded his flight suit for pinstripes.

Jerry was called up to the Yankees in 1949 and was an anchor at second base smoothly fielding and turning double plays for the Yankees.

In 1950, he was an All-Star. That same year he would be named MVP of the World Series.